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Su

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(54) **DISPLAY FIXTURE**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**

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A47F 5/11	(2006.01)
A47B 87/02	(2006.01)
A47B 57/06	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***A47F 5/11*** (2013.01); ***A47B 87/0215*** (2013.01); *A47B 57/06* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC A47F 5/11; A47B 87/0215; A47B 57/06
USPC 211/126.7, 126.12, 14, 188, 186, 187, 211/189, 190–194, 134; 108/91, 180, 186, 108/189, 190, 157.16, 158.12; 312/108, 312/111, 265.1
See application file for complete search history.

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Primary Examiner — Joshua J Michener
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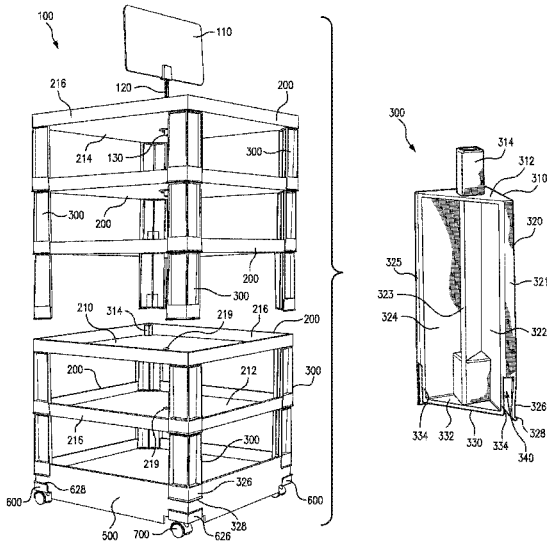
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A display fixture is disclosed. In one embodiment, a display fixture comprises a plurality of shelves and a plurality of posts supporting the plurality of shelves. Each shelf may comprise a panel, a plurality of apertures formed in the panel and a plurality of walls extending upwardly from the panel and forming a perimeter of the panel. Each post may comprise a shoulder, a columnar member extending from the shoulder, a seat disposed opposite the shoulder and comprising a cavity configured to receive a columnar member from another post, an elongate body disposed between and joining the shoulder and the seat, and a skirt extending from the body and surrounding the seat. The skirt and the seat may define a tapered recess, which may expand to receive a portion of the panel walls.

19 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets



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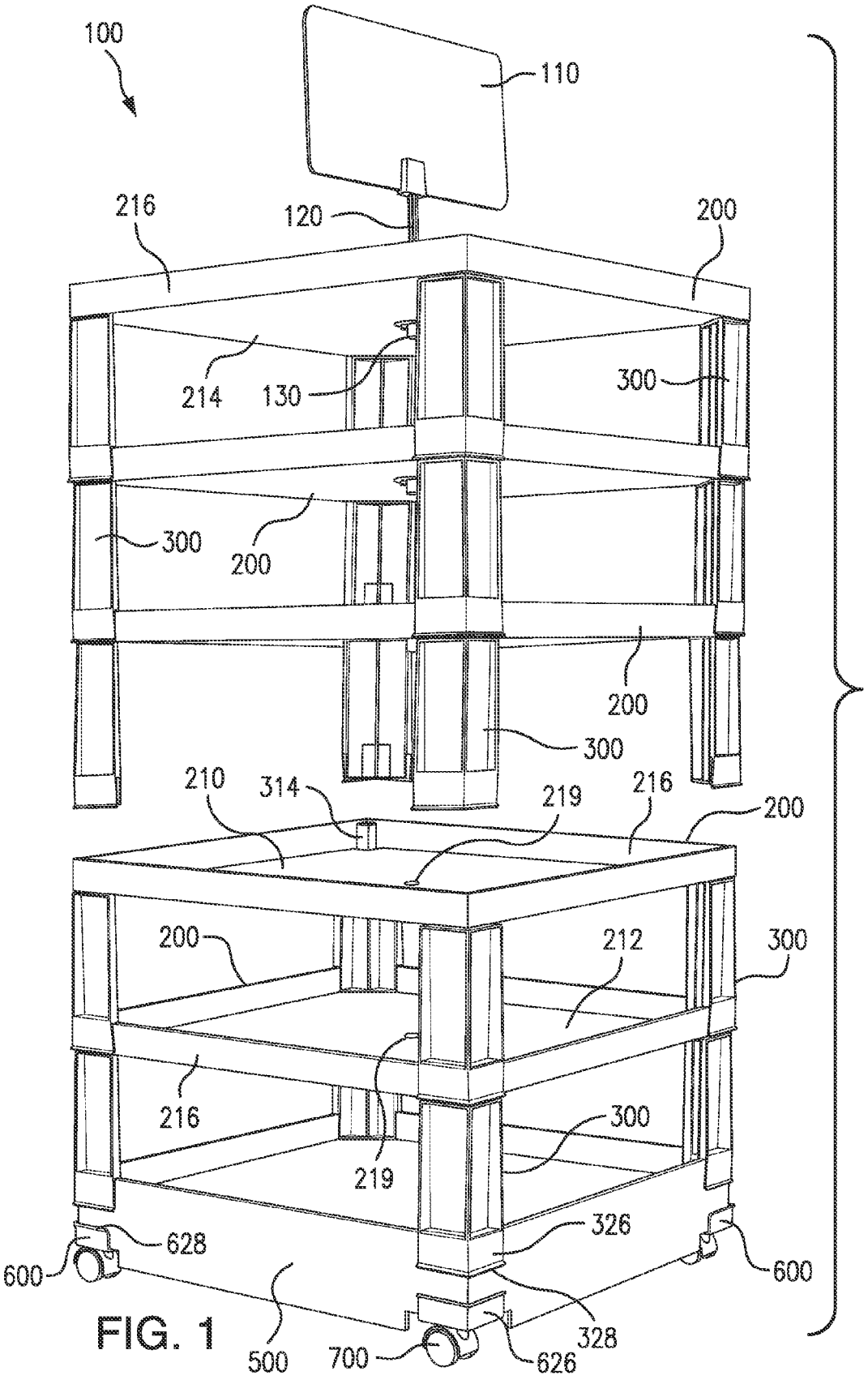
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FIG. 1

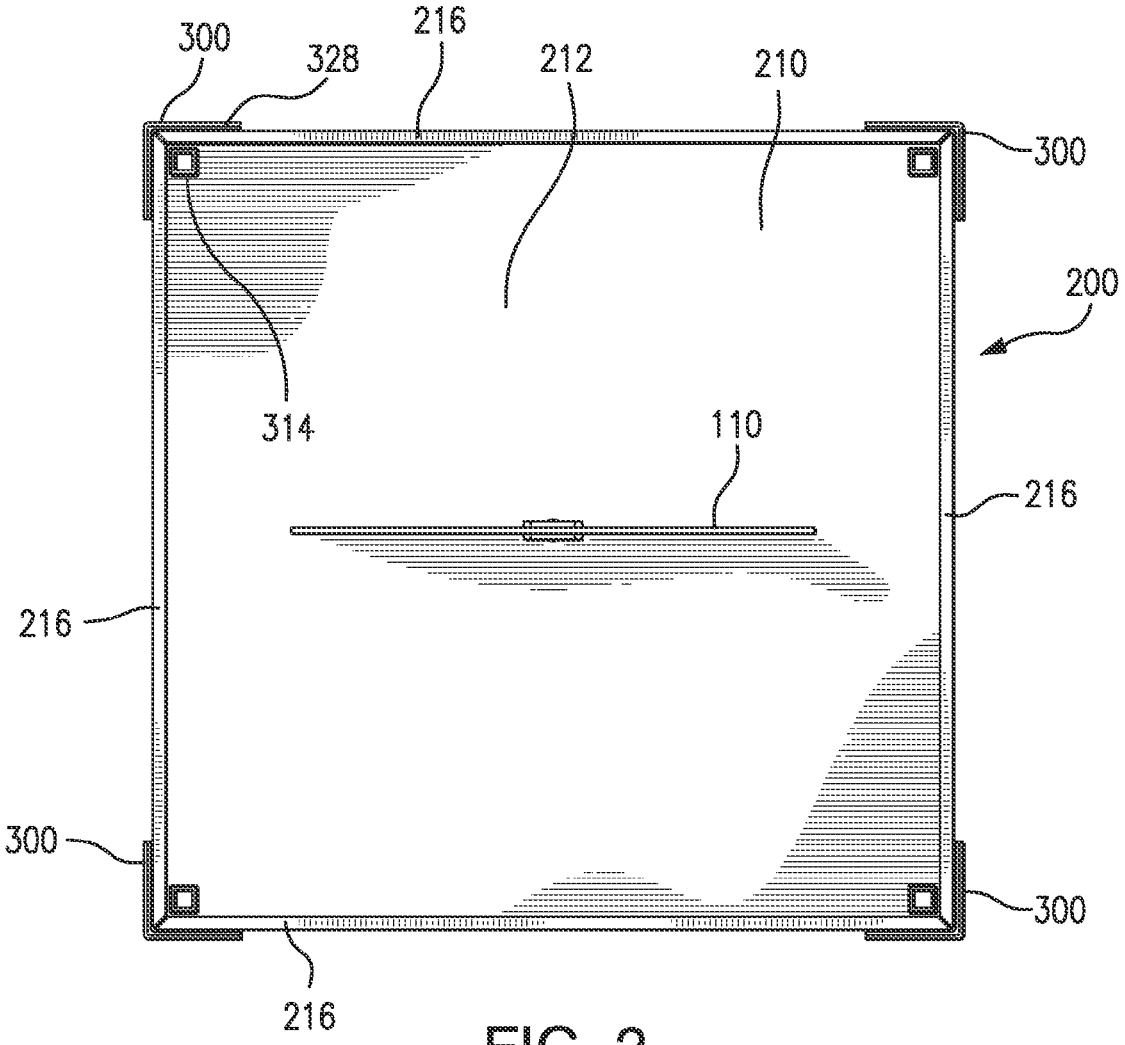

FIG. 2

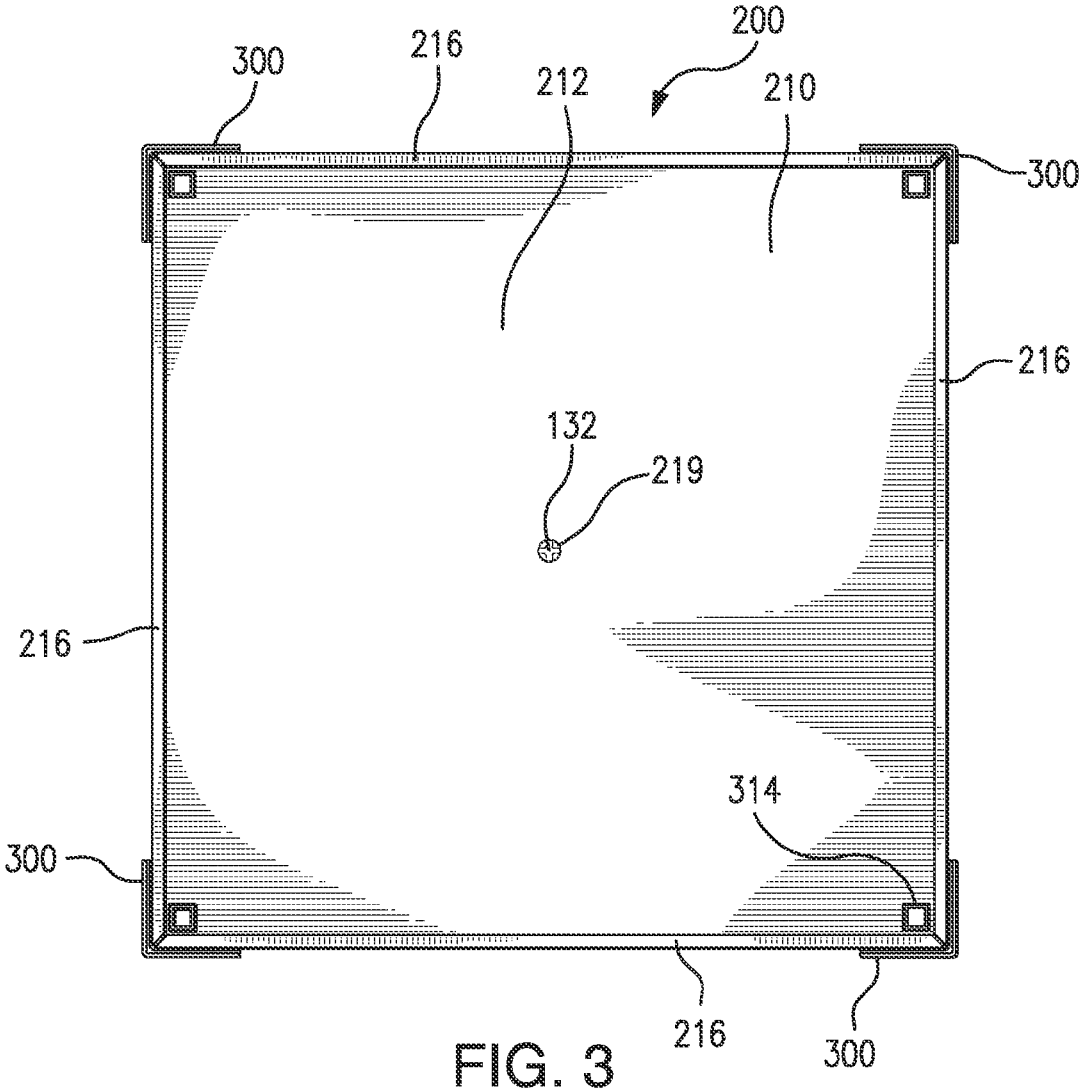

FIG. 3

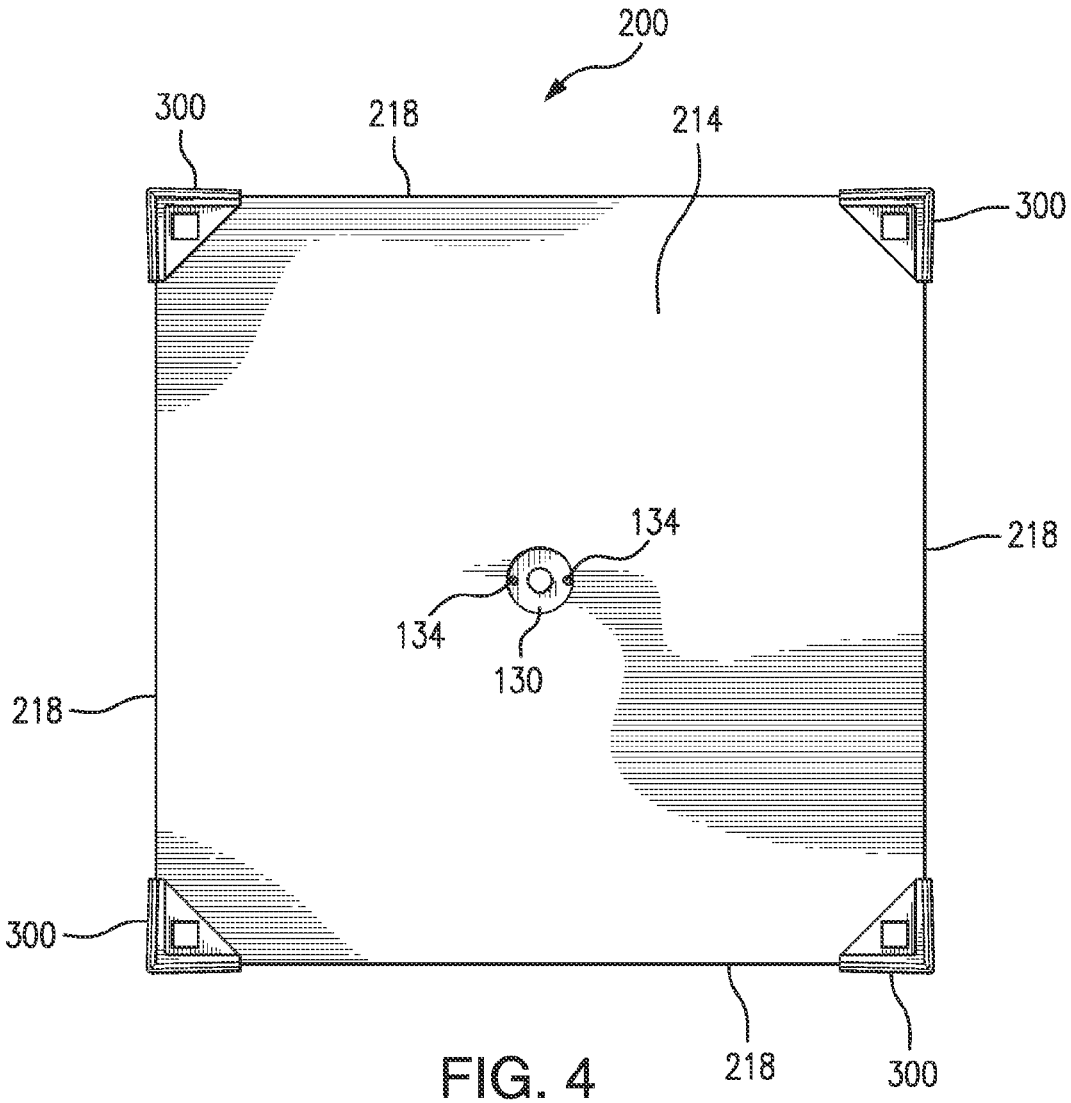

FIG. 4

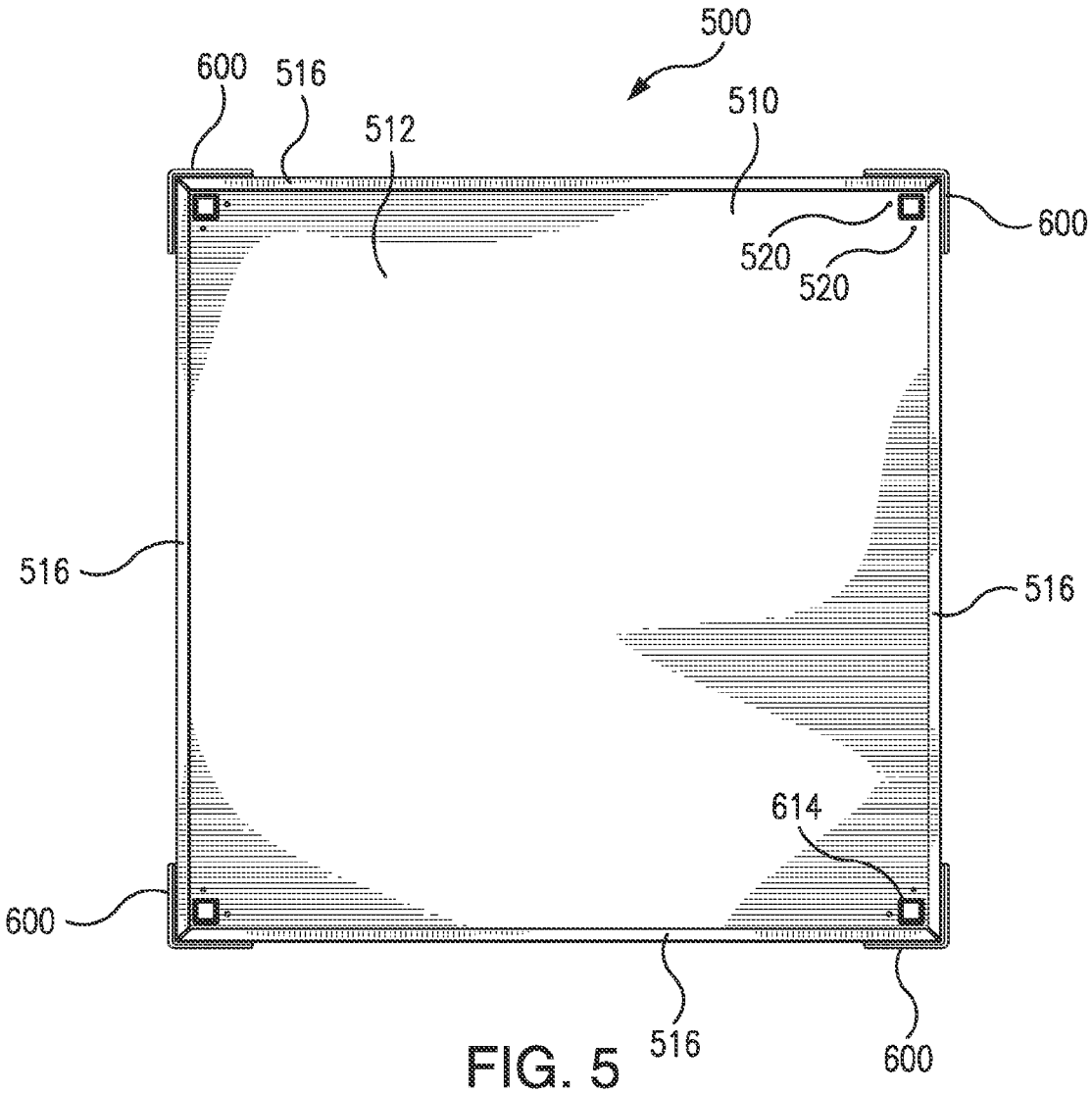

FIG. 5

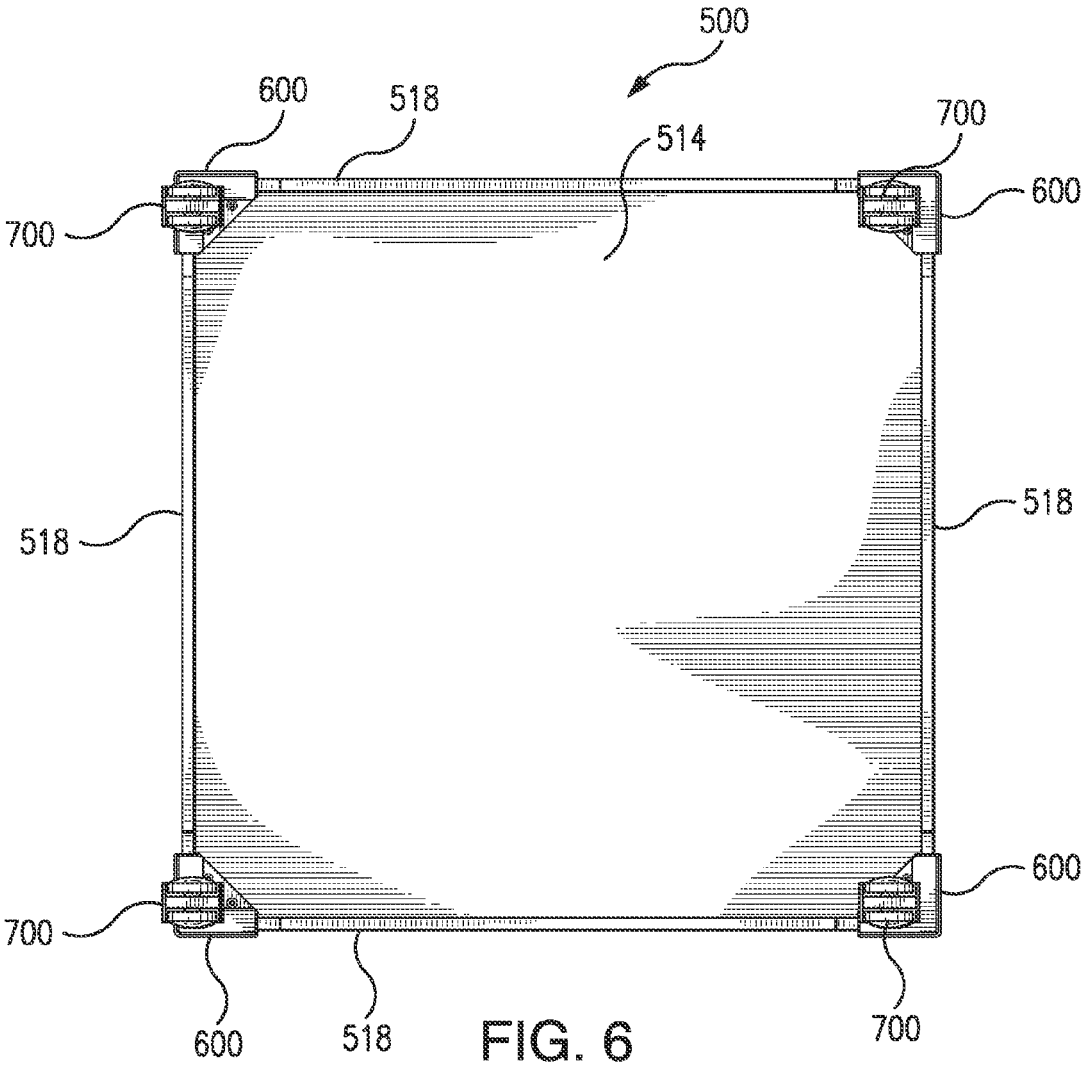

FIG. 6

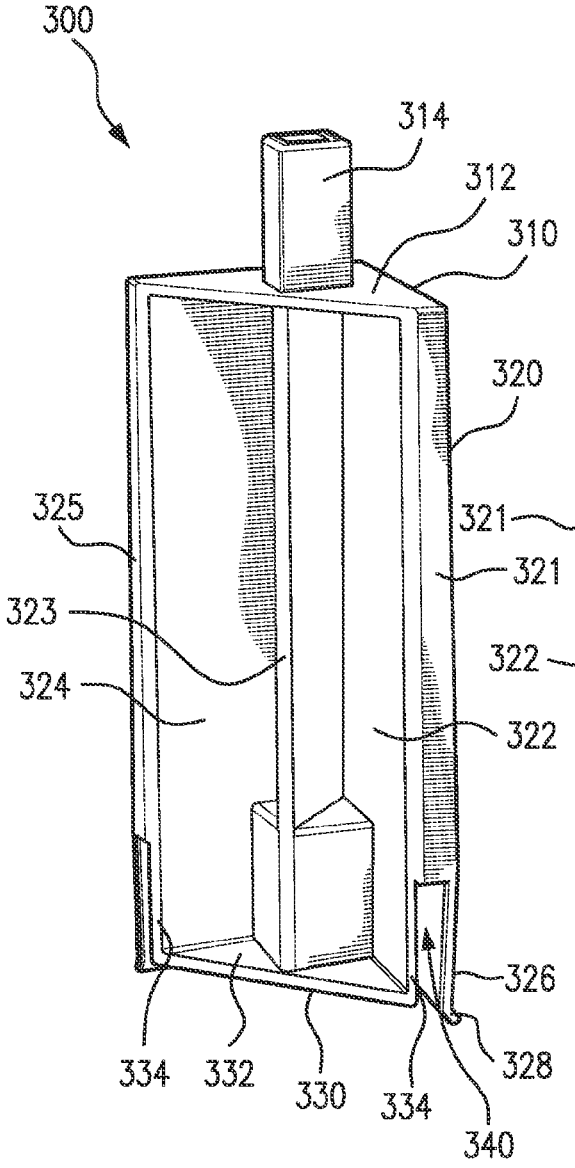
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FIG. 7

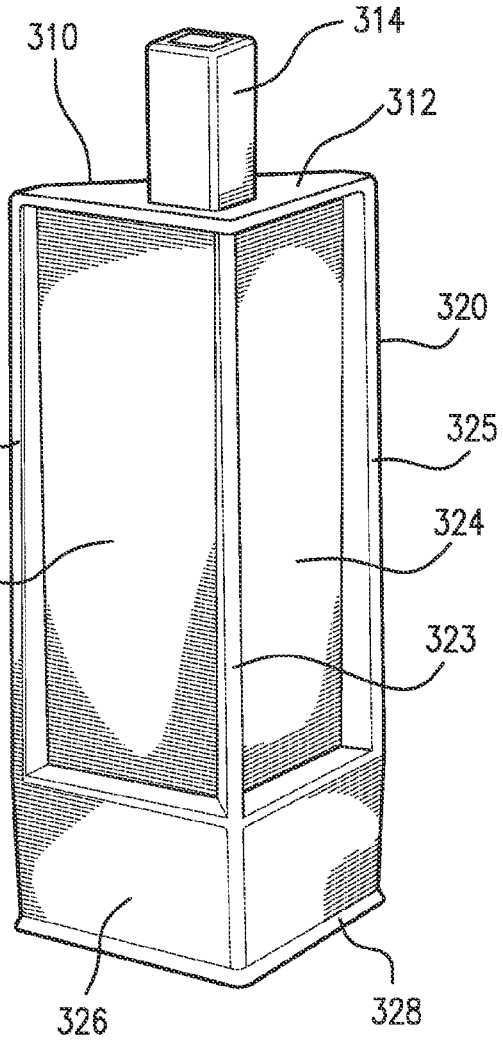
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FIG. 8

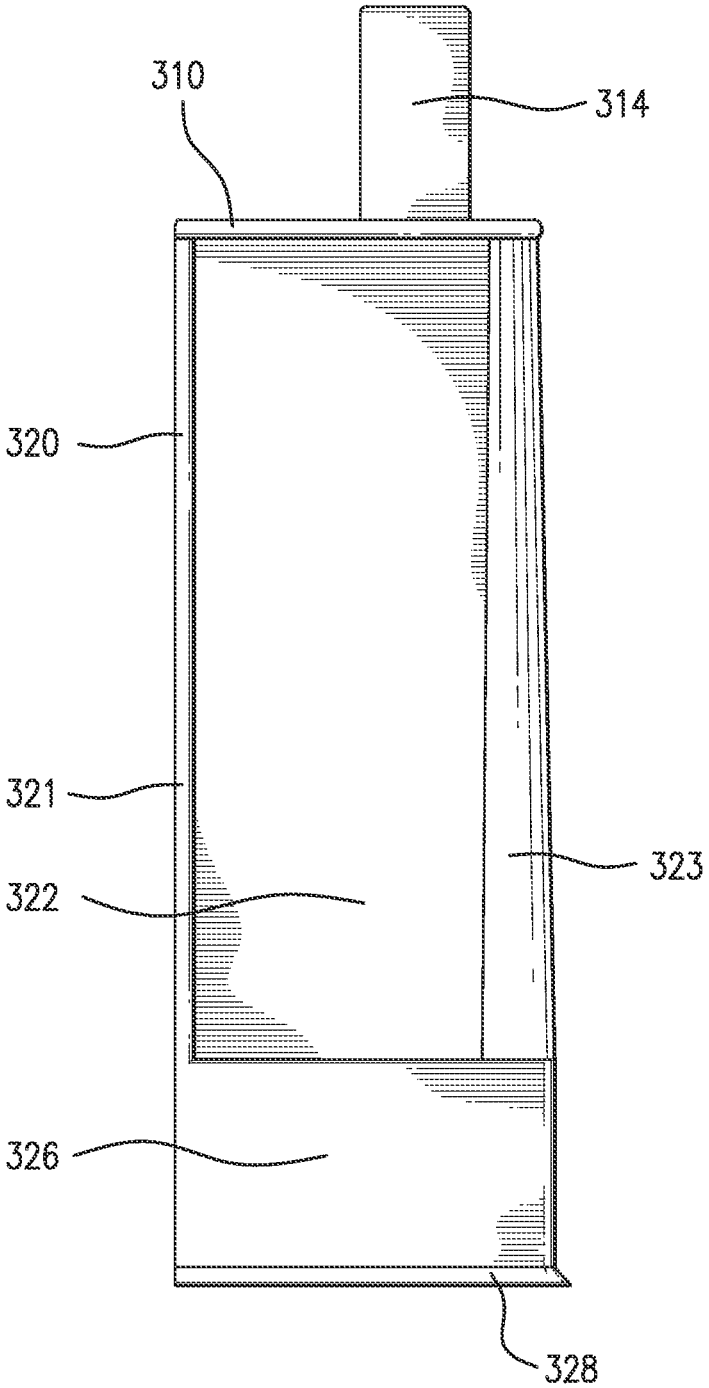

FIG. 9

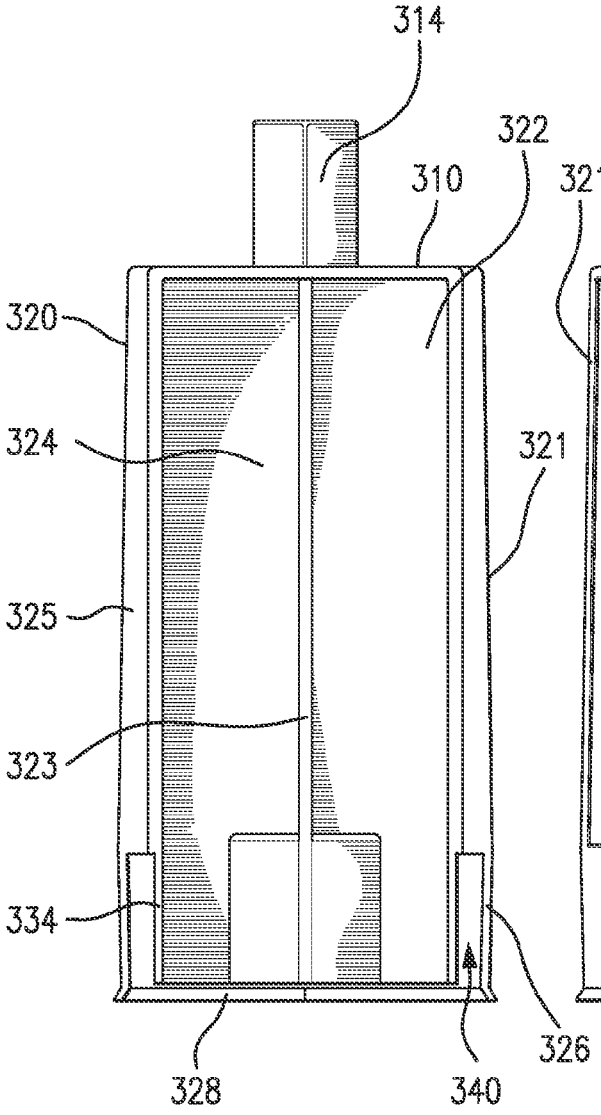
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FIG. 10

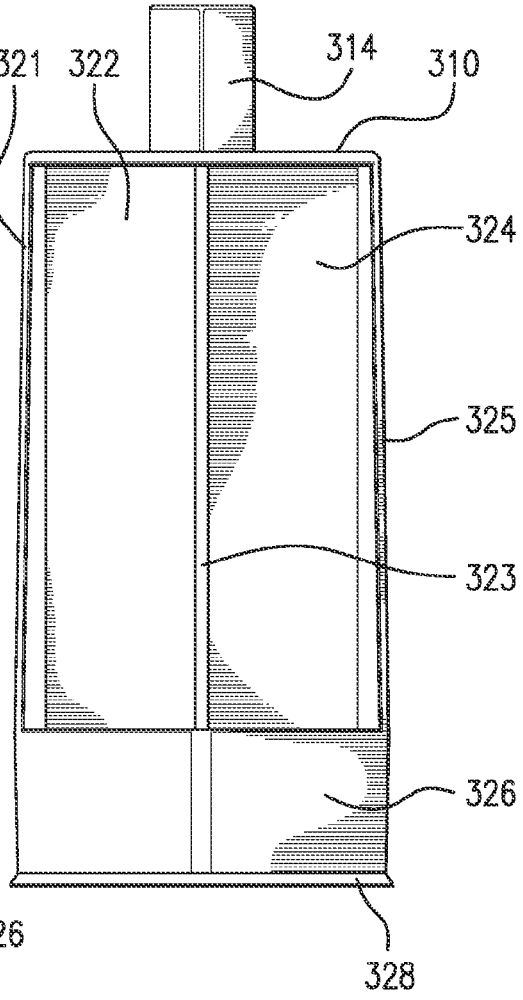
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FIG. 11

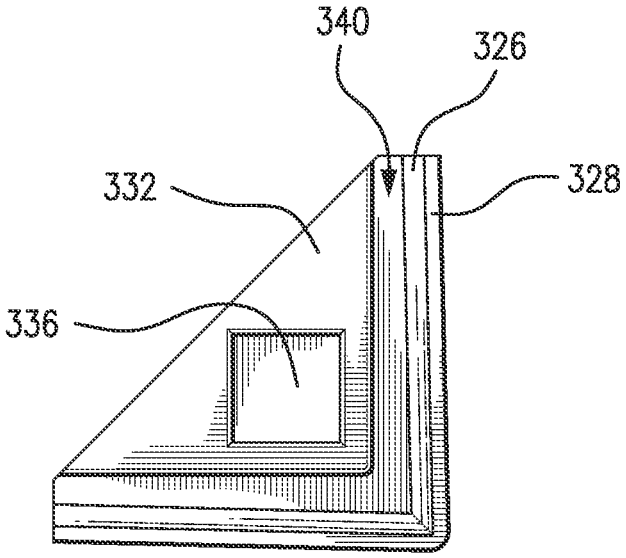


FIG. 12

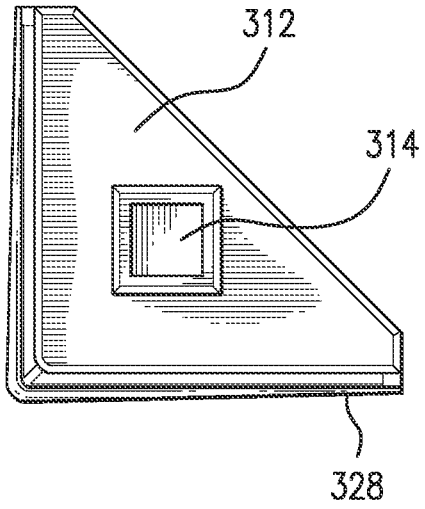
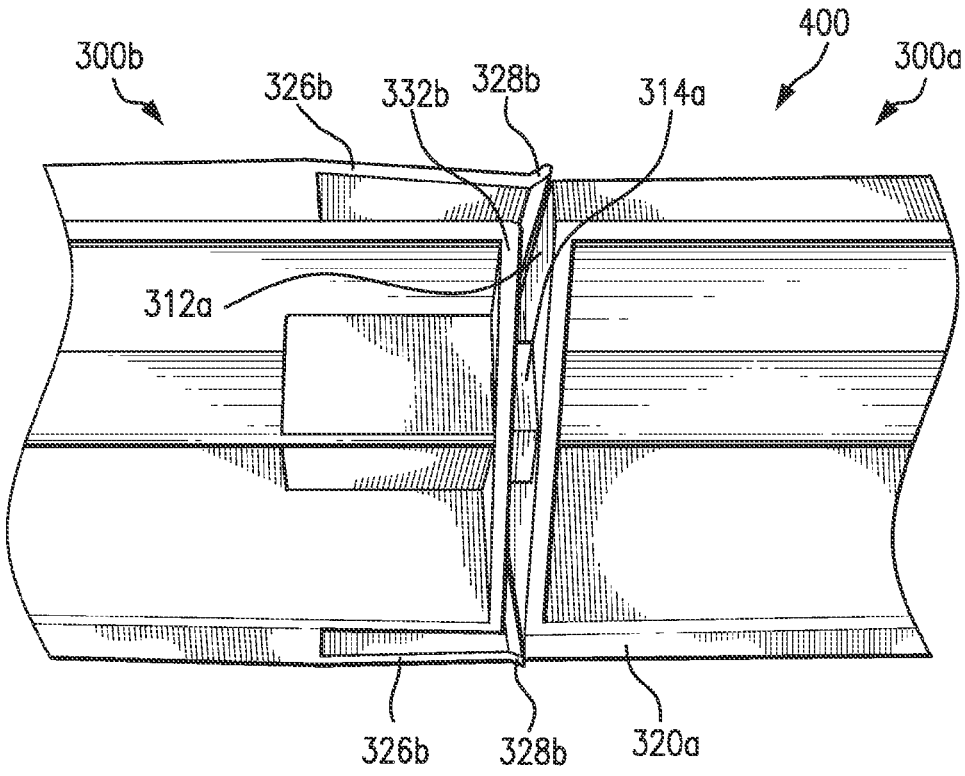


FIG. 13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300b
300a
326b
332b
328b
314a
312a
326b
328b
320a

FIG.14

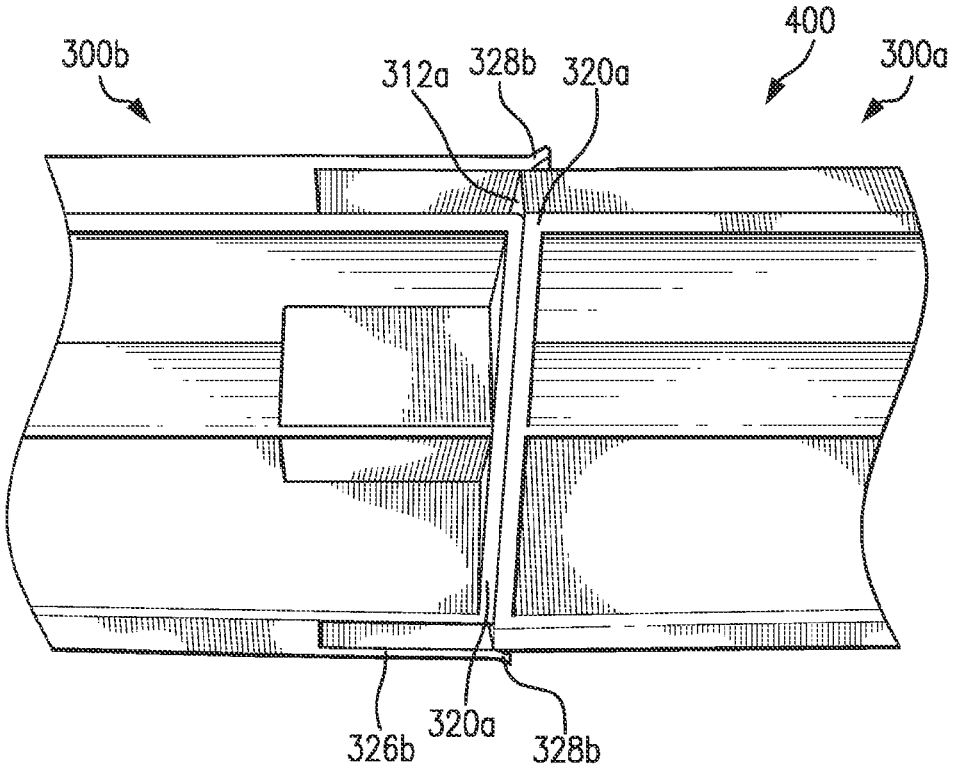
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FIG.15

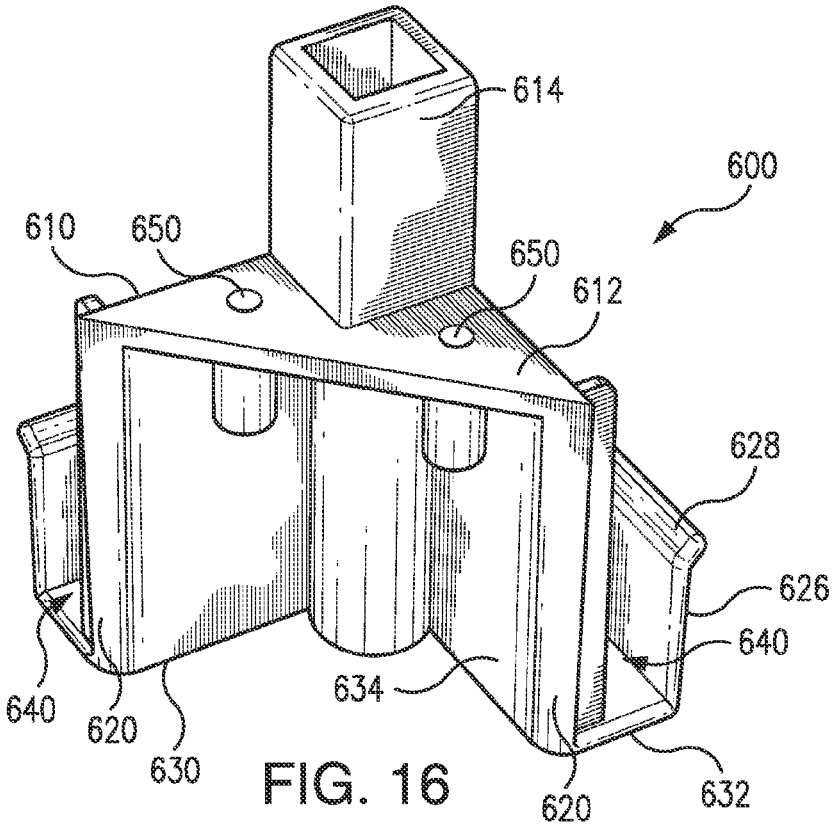
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FIG. 16

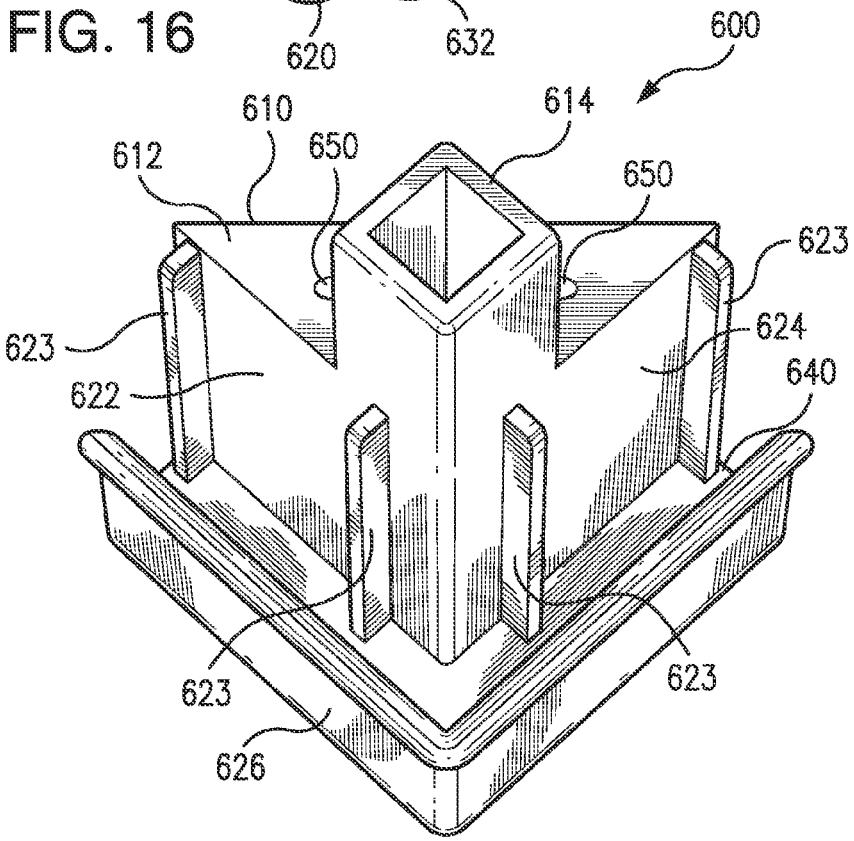
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FIG. 17

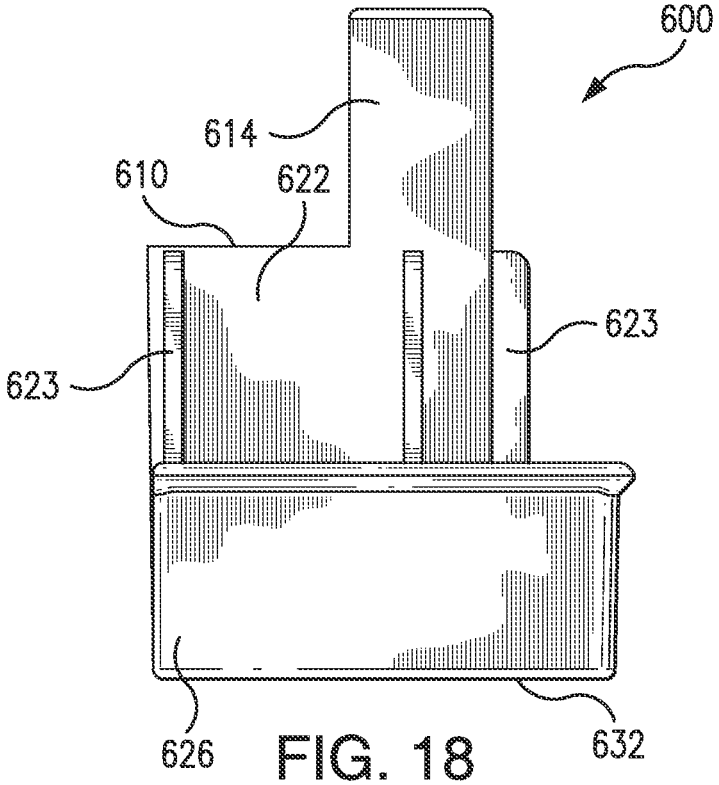

FIG. 18

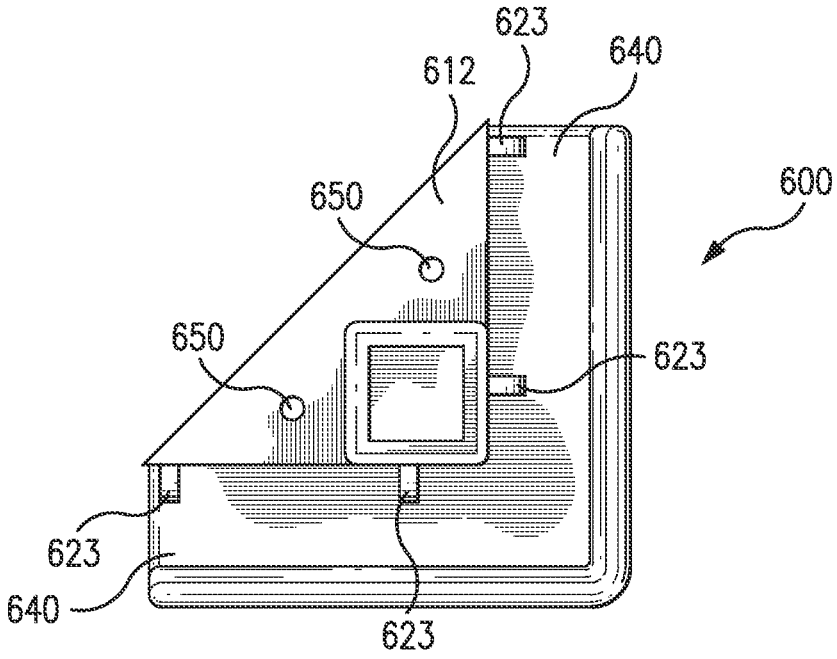

FIG. 19

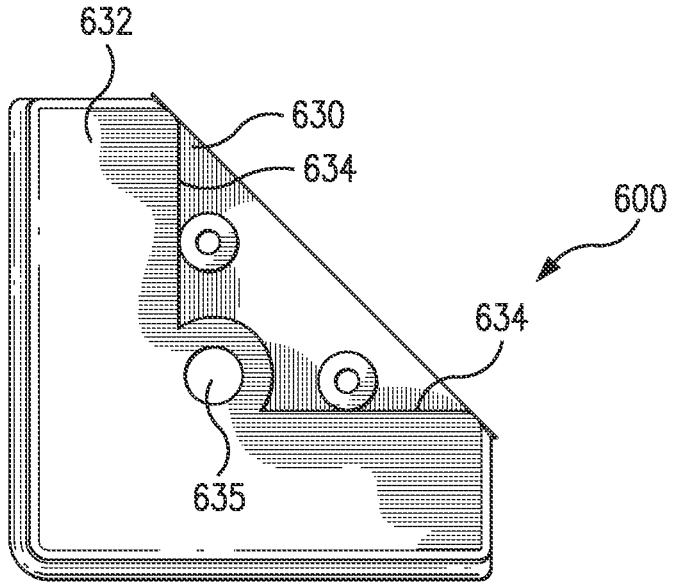

FIG. 20

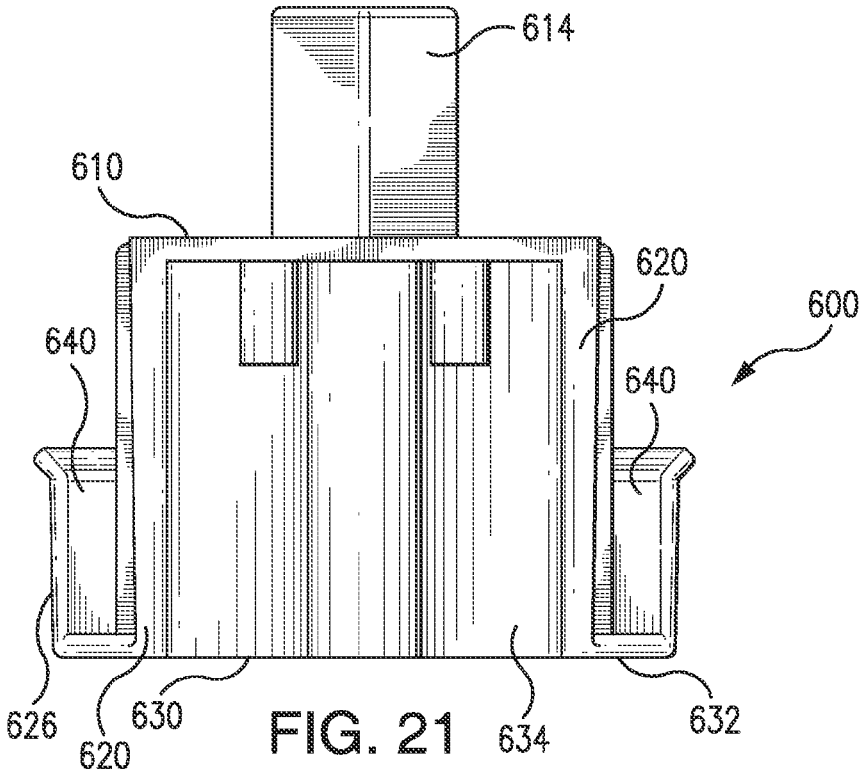
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FIG. 21

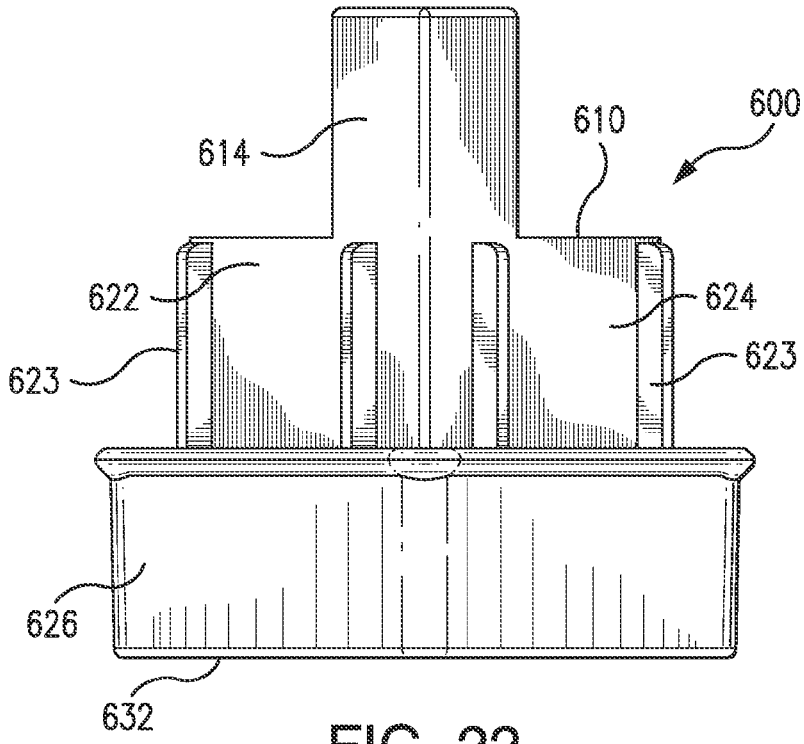
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FIG. 22

DISPLAY FIXTURE

RELATED APPLICATION

The present application is related to commonly-owned U.S. Design patent application No. 29/396,836, entitled "Display Fixture," which is filed concurrently herewith and which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety for all purposes.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to a display fixture. More particularly, the present invention relates to a display fixture with removable and stackable posts.

BACKGROUND

Merchandise is often displayed in retail settings on racks, fixtures, or shelving units. Some display fixtures are of a predetermined configuration and of fixed height between shelf levels. However, the size and quantity of merchandise to be displayed varies. Fixed systems obviously cannot accommodate these changes, requiring merchants to purchase additional and different types of display fixtures for use with different or changing merchandise. Other display fixtures require the use of fasteners for assembly. Assembly and disassembly of such systems requires the use of tools, increases the complexity of assembly and disassembly, and increases the possibility of misplaced or lost fasteners when moving or storing these display fixtures. Still other display fixtures utilize corner posts that secure directly into the shelves above and below, which may transfer more loads than desired into the shelves.

SUMMARY

The present invention recognizes and addresses disadvantages of prior art constructions and methods. Embodiments of the present invention provide a display fixture. In one aspect, the present invention provides a display fixture comprising a plurality of shelves and a plurality of posts supporting the plurality of shelves. Each shelf may comprise a panel, a plurality of apertures formed in the panel and a plurality of walls extending upwardly from the panel and forming a perimeter of the panel. Each post may comprise a shoulder, a columnar member extending from the shoulder, a seat disposed opposite the shoulder and comprising a cavity configured to receive a columnar member from another post, an elongate body disposed between and joining the shoulder and the seat, and a skirt extending from the body and surrounding the seat. The skirt and the seat may define a tapered recess. The tapered recess may expand to receive a portion of the panel walls.

In another aspect, the present invention provides a post for a shelf comprising a panel wall in which the post comprises a body comprising a first end and a second end opposite the first end. A shoulder may be disposed on the first end of the body and a seat disposed on the second end of the body. A columnar member may extend from the shoulder. In one embodiment, the seat may comprise a cavity that may be configured to receive a columnar member from a second post. Likewise, the columnar member is configured to be received by the second post. The post may comprise means for retaining the panel wall. In one embodiment, the retaining means may comprise a plurality of ribs extending from the body. In another embodiment, the retaining means may comprise a skirt extending from the body. The skirt may surround the seat. The skirt and the seat may define a tapered recess, which may be configured to receive a corner of the shelf.

In an embodiment where the corner of the shelf is not retained by the tapered recess, the skirt is not parallel with a wall of the seat. In an embodiment where the corner of the shelf is retained by the tapered recess, the skirt is parallel to the wall of the seat. The tapered recess expands to receive the corner of the shelf, and thus, is no longer tapered. The skirt may comprise a lip projecting obliquely from a base of the skirt.

In still another aspect, the present invention provides an interlocking post assembly comprising at least two posts. Each of the two posts may comprise a shoulder, a seat disposed opposite the shoulder, an elongate body disposed between and joining the shoulder and the seat, and a skirt extending from the body and surrounding the seat. The shoulder may comprise a columnar member. The seat may comprise a cavity. The skirt may comprise a lip projecting obliquely from a base of the skirt. The skirt and the seat may define a tapered recess.

In one embodiment, the columnar member of a first post is slidably received by the cavity of a second post. The shoulder of the first post and the seat of the second post may be disposed in abutting engagement. The skirt of the second post may be disposed in gripping engagement with the first post. The tapered recess of the second post expands to receive a portion of the body of the first post. The engagement of the first post against the lip of the skirt of the second post urges the skirt of the second post from the seat of the second post.

Those skilled in the art will appreciate the scope of the present invention and realize additional aspects thereof after reading the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments in association with the accompanying drawing figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A full and enabling disclosure of the present invention, including the best mode thereof, directed to one of ordinary skill in the art, is set forth in the specification, which makes reference to the appended drawings, in which:

FIG. **1** shows a perspective view of a display fixture according to an embodiment of the present invention having a plurality of shelves;

FIG. **2** shows a top plan view of the uppermost shelf of the display fixture of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **3** shows a top plan view of the uppermost shelf of the display fixture of FIG. **1** with a placard removed;

FIG. **4** shows a bottom plan view of the uppermost shelf of the display fixture of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **5** shows a top plan view of the base of the display fixture of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **6** shows a bottom plan view of the base of the display fixture of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **7** shows a rear perspective view of one of the plurality of the posts of the display fixture of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **8** shows a front perspective view of the post of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **9** shows a side elevation view of the post of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **10** shows a rear elevation view of the post of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **11** shows a front elevation view of the post of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **12** shows a bottom plan view of the post of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **13** shows a top plan view of the post of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **14** shows a perspective view of two posts according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **15** shows a perspective view of the two posts of FIG. **14** in an interlocked configuration;

FIG. **16** shows a rear perspective view of a base support post without caster wheel of the display fixture of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **17** shows a front perspective view of the base support post of FIG. **16**;

FIG. **18** shows a side elevation view of the base support post of FIG. **16**;

FIG. **19** shows a top plan view of the base support post of FIG. **16**;

FIG. **20** shows a bottom plan view of the base support post of FIG. **16**;

FIG. **21** shows a rear elevation view of the base support post of FIG. **16**; and

FIG. **22** shows a front elevation view of the base support post of FIG. **16**.

Repeat use of reference characters in the present specification and drawings is intended to represent same or analogous figures or elements of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Reference will now be made in detail to presently preferred embodiments of the invention, one or more examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. Each example is provided by way of explanation, not limitation, of the invention. In fact, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that modifications and variations can be made in the present invention without departing from the scope or spirit thereof. For instance, features illustrated or described as part of one embodiment may be used on another embodiment to yield a still further embodiment. Thus, it is intended that the present invention covers such modifications and variations as come within the scope of the appended claims and their equivalents.

Referring now to FIGS. **1-6**, an exemplary embodiment of a display fixture **100** is shown. The display fixture **100** may be used to display or store toys or other items. The display fixture **100** can be adapted readily to accommodate various configurations. For example, a plurality of shelves **200** can be added or removed without the use of fasteners. Additionally, as posts **300** can be stacked one atop another, a height between shelves **200** can be altered permitting larger items to be displayed or stored. As the display fixture **100** requires no fasteners, assembly and disassembly of the display fixture **100** is relatively simple.

The display fixture **100** includes a plurality of shelves **200**, which are supported by a plurality of posts **300** disposed between the shelves **200**. A base **500** is the bottommost shelf and supports the plurality of shelves **200** and the plurality of posts **300**. The base **500** is supported by a plurality of base supports **600**, which include caster wheels **700** to facilitate movement of the display fixture **100**.

The display fixture **100** shown in FIG. **1** is partially disassembled to facilitate its description herein. The number of shelves **200** can be varied from that shown and described herein. The shelves **200** shown are square in shape. However, other suitable or desired shapes can be used for the shelves **200**. The posts **300** can be modified accordingly to accommodate the particular shape of the shelves **200**. However, the posts **300** will be described herein with reference to supporting the plurality of square shelves **200** shown herein.

The display fixture **100** may include a placard **110** supported by a rod **120**. The placard **110** may include text or images to advertise or promote the merchandise placed on the display fixture **100**. As shown in FIG. **3**, the placard **110** and rod **120** may be removed from the display fixture **100**.

Each shelf **200** may include a substantially planar panel **210** formed of cardboard. Other suitable materials can be used for the panel **210**, such as for example, paperboard, corrugated fiberboard, boxboard, cartonboard, containerboard, binder board, or plastics. The panel **210** may include a top surface **212** and a bottom surface **214**. The top surface **212** may be formed of a separate component and joined or attached with the bottom surface **214** to form the panel **210**. Alternatively, the top surface **212** may be formed integrally with the bottom surface **214**. The bottom surface **214** supports the top surface **212**. Outer portions of the bottom surface **214** may fold over to form a plurality of panel walls **216** defining a perimeter **218** of the panel **210**. The walls **216** extend upwardly from the bottom surface **214** of the panel **210**.

A plurality of apertures (not shown) are formed in the panel **210** to facilitate engagement with the plurality of posts **300** as will be described in further detail below. An orifice **219** is formed in the panel **210** to enable the rod **120** to be inserted into and supported by a rod support **130**. The orifice **219** and the rod support **130** can be disposed in the center of the panel **210**, or elsewhere depending on the desired position of the placard **110**. The rod support **130** can be secured to the panel **210** by one or more fasteners **134**. The rod support **130** may include a guide **132** to facilitate the placement and engagement of the rod **120** in the rod support **130**. As shown, the guide **132** may be cross-shaped, which forms a complementary or mating shape with the rod **120**. Other suitable shapes or configurations may be used for the rod **120** and the guide **132**.

The display fixture **100** includes a base **500**, which supports the display fixture **100**. The base **500** also may be used to display merchandise (not shown) as do the plurality of shelves **200**. The base **500** shown is square in shape and generally corresponds in shape and configuration with that of the plurality of shelves **200**. Other suitable or desired shapes can be used for the base **500**.

The base **500** may include a substantially planar base panel **510** formed of cardboard. Other suitable materials can be used for the base panel **510**, such as for example, paperboard, corrugated fiberboard, boxboard, cartonboard, containerboard, binder board, or plastics. The base panel **510** may include a top surface **512** and a bottom surface **514**. The top surface **512** may be formed of a separate component and joined or attached with the bottom surface **514** to form the base panel **510**. Alternatively, the top surface **512** may be formed integrally with the bottom surface **514**. The bottom surface **514** supports the top surface **512**. A plurality of base panel walls **516** extend upwardly beyond the top surface **512** and downwardly below the bottom surface **514** and define a perimeter **518** of the base panel **510**. A plurality of fasteners **520** couples the plurality of base support posts **600** to the base **500**.

Referring now to FIGS. **7-13**, an exemplary embodiment of the post **300** is shown. The plurality of posts **300** supports the plurality of shelves **200**. Each post **300** includes a first end **310** and a second end **330** disposed opposite the first end **310**. The first end **310** can include a shoulder **312**, which can be a substantially planar surface to facilitate engagement of the post **300** with the bottom surface **214** of the panel **210**.

Extending from the shoulder **312** of the first end **310** is a columnar member **314**. The columnar member **314** may be rectangular and its cross-section taken along an axis orthogonal to the longitudinal axis of the post **300** can be square. Other suitable cross-sections can be used, such as for example, round or triangular. The columnar member **314** is hollow, although it can also be solid in an alternate embodiment.

The second end **330** can include a seat **332**, which can be a substantially planar surface to facilitate engagement of the post **300** with the top surface **212** of the panel **210**. The seat **332** can include a seat wall **334**, which is disposed substantially orthogonal to the seat **332** and along a perimeter of the seat **332**. A cavity **336** is formed in the seat **332**. The cavity **336** is configured to slidably receive the columnar member **314** from another post **300**. Likewise, the columnar member **314** is configured to be received by another post **300**.

Disposed between and joining the shoulder **312** of the first end **310** and the seat **332** of the second end **330** is an elongate body **320**. The elongate body **320** includes planar surfaces **322**, **324**. On an outer surface (see FIG. **8**), the planar surfaces **322**, **324** are sunken and framed by ribs **321**, **323**, **325**. Alternatively, the elongate body **320** can be solid. On an inner surface (see FIG. **7**), the planar surfaces **322**, **324** are bisected by rib **323** and extend from the shoulder **312** of the first end **310** to the seat **332** of the second end **330**.

Extending from the elongate body **320** is a skirt **326** surrounding the seat **332** and the seat wall **334**. A lip **328** is formed integrally with a base of the skirt **326** and projects obliquely from the skirt **326**. As better seen in FIG. **7**, the skirt **326** and the seat **332** define a tapered recess **340**, that is, the skirt **326** is not parallel to the seat wall **334**. At a distal position from the seat **332**, the tapered recess **340** is dimensioned to correspond substantially to a thickness of the panel walls **216**. Proximal to the seat **332**, the tapered recess **340** is dimensioned to be less than the thickness of the panel wall **216**. The tapered recess **340** of each post **300** is thus configured to receive the corner of the panel walls **216** of each shelf **200**.

The tapered recess **340** of each post **300** expands to receive a portion of the panel walls **216**. As better seen in FIG. **1**, the corners of the panel walls **216** are received by the tapered recess **340**. The post **300** is in gripping engagement with a perimeter surface of the corners of the panel walls **216**. When the corner of the shelf **200** is received in the tapered recess **340**, the skirt **326** is parallel to the seat wall **334**. Thus, in this configuration, the tapered recess **340** is no longer tapered. When the corners of the panel walls **216** are removed from the tapered recess **340**, the skirt **326** returns substantially to its original position. Thus, this configuration of the post **300**, including the skirt **326**, the elasticity of the skirt **326**, and the seat wall **334** comprise the means for retaining a corner of the shelf **200**.

When a first shelf **200** is joined or coupled with a second shelf **200**, the columnar member **314** of a first post **300** extends through one of the apertures of one of the panels **210** and is slidably received by the cavity **336** of a second post **300**. The panel **210** is interposed between the shoulder **312** of the first post **300** and the seat **332** of the second post **300**. In another embodiment, a third post **300** can be coupled directly with the second post **300** (that is, without an intervening panel **210**). Two posts **300** interlocked together will be described below and with reference to FIGS. **14** and **15**.

In an interlocking post assembly **400**, the columnar member **314***a* of the first post **300***a* is slidably received by the cavity (not shown) of the second post **300***b*, the shoulder **312***a* of the first post **300***a* and the seat **332***b* of the second post **300***b* are disposed in abutting engagement, and the skirt **326***b* of the second post **300***b* is disposed in confronting engagement with the body **320***a* of the first post **300***a*. The tapered recess **340***b* of the second post **300***b* expands to receive a portion of the body **320***a* and the shoulder **312***a* of the first post **300***a*. The engagement of the first post **300***a* against the lip **328***b* of the second post **300***b* urges the skirt **326***b* of the second post **300***b* away from the seat **332***b* of the second post **300***b*. The skirt **326***b* of the second post **300***b* is thus disposed in gripping engagement with the first post **300***a*. As shown in FIG. **15**, the two posts **300***a*, **300***b* form an assembly and are disposed in an interlocked configuration.

Referring now to FIGS. **16-22**, an exemplary embodiment of the base support post **600** is shown. The plurality of base support posts **600** supports the base **500** as well as the plurality of shelves **200** and the plurality of posts **300**. Each base support post **600** is coupled with a caster wheel **700** for ease of moving the display fixture **100**. For clarity of illustration and to facilitate understanding, the caster wheel **700** has been removed from the base support post **600** shown in FIGS. **16-22**.

Each base support post **600** includes a first end **610** and a second end **630** disposed opposite the first end **610**. The first end **610** can include a shoulder **612**, which can be a substantially planar surface to facilitate engagement of the base support post **600** with the bottom surface **514** of the base **500**.

Extending from the shoulder **612** of the first end **610** is a columnar member **614**. The columnar member **614** may be rectangular and its cross-section taken along an axis orthogonal to the longitudinal axis of the base support post **600** can be square. Other suitable cross-sections can be used, such as for example, round or triangular. The columnar member **614** is hollow, although it can also be solid in an alternate embodiment. The columnar member **614** of the base support post **600** is configured to be received by the cavity **336** of post **300**.

The second end **630** can include a seat **632**, which can be a substantially planar surface. The seat **632** can include a seat wall **634**, which is disposed substantially orthogonal to the seat **632** and along a perimeter of the seat **632**. Disposed on the second end **630** and defined by the seat wall **634** is a cavity **635** configured to receive a stem or post (not shown) of a caster wheel.

Disposed between and joining the shoulder **612** of the first end **610** and the seat **632** of the second end **630** is a body **620**. The body **620** includes planar surfaces **622**, **624**, which are disposed orthogonal to one another. Coupled with and extending from planar surfaces **622**, **624** are ribs **623**. When the display fixture **100** is assembled, the ribs **623** contact an inner surface of the base panel walls **516** to retain a corner of the base panel walls **516** in conjunction with the other structures of the base support post **600** shown and described herein.

Extending substantially orthogonal to the seat **632** and substantially parallel to planar surfaces **622**, **624** is a skirt **626**. The skirt **626** surrounds planar surfaces **622**, **624** and together with the seat **632** defines a channel or recess **640**. The recess **640** of the base support post **600** is configured to receive a corner of the base panel walls **510**.

A lip **628** is formed integrally with and extends along an entire periphery of the skirt **626**. The lip **628** projects obliquely from the skirt **626** and can act as a guide when receiving the base panel walls **516**. Unlike the tapered recess **340** of post **300**, the recess **640** of base support post **600** does not expand to receive the base panel walls **516**. The base panel **510** is secured to the base support post **600** by a plurality of fasteners **520** that are fixedly attached or engaged with the fastener orifices **650**.

While one or more preferred embodiments of the invention have been described above, it should be understood that any and all equivalent realizations of the present invention are included within the scope and spirit thereof. The embodiments depicted are presented by way of example only and not intended as limitations upon the present invention. Thus, it should be understood by those of ordinary skill in this art that the present invention is not limited to these embodiments as modifications can be made. Therefore, it is contemplated that

any and all such embodiments are included in the present invention as may fall within the scope and spirit thereof.

That which is claimed:

1. A display fixture comprising:

a plurality of shelves, each shelf comprising a panel for supporting objects thereon, a plurality of apertures formed in the panel and a plurality of walls extending upwardly from the panel and forming a perimeter of the panel; and

a plurality of posts supporting the plurality of shelves, each post comprising a generally horizontal shoulder, a columnar member extending upwardly from the shoulder at an upper end of the post, a seat disposed opposite the shoulder at a lower end of the post, the seat comprising a cavity configured to receive a columnar member from another lower post in order to stack one corresponding shelf on top of a second corresponding shelf, an elongate body disposed between and joining the shoulder and the seat, the body including a pair of planar surfaces that intersect each other at an angle and extend from the shoulder to the seat, and a rib extending from the shoulder to the seat and bisecting the pair of planar surface, and a skirt extending from the elongated body and surrounding the seat, the skirt and the seat defining a tapered recess there between, that expands to receive a portion of a corresponding shelf wall.

2. The display fixture of claim **1**, wherein the columnar member of a first post extends through one of the panel apertures of a corresponding first shelf and is slidably received by the cavity of a second post.

3. The display fixture of claim **2**, wherein the panel of the corresponding first shelf is interposed between the shoulder of the first post and the seat of the second post.

4. The display fixture of claim **3**, wherein the skirt of the second post is in gripping engagement with a perimeter surface of corresponding panel walls of the corresponding first shelf which is received by the tapered recess of the second post.

5. The display fixture of claim **4**, wherein the perimeter surface of the corresponding panel walls of the corresponding first shelf received by the tapered recess of the second post comprises a corner.

6. The display fixture of claim **1**, wherein the skirt of each post comprises a lip projecting obliquely from a base of the skirt.

7. The display fixture of claim **6** further comprising a third post, wherein the columnar member of the second post is slidably received by the cavity of the third post, the shoulder of the second post and the seat of the third post are disposed in abutting engagement, and the skirt of the third post is in confronting engagement with the body of the second post.

8. The display fixture of claim **7**, wherein the tapered recess of the third post expands to receive a portion of the body and the shoulder of the second post.

9. The display fixture of claim **1**, wherein each panel comprises a top surface and a bottom surface.

10. The display fixture of claim **9**, wherein the panel walls of a corresponding shelf are formed from the bottom surface of the corresponding panel.

11. A post for a shelf comprising a panel and corresponding panel walls extending upward from the panel, the post comprising:

a body comprising a first end, a second end opposite the first end and a first planar surface and a second planar surface extending between the first end and the second end of the body, the first planar surface and the second planar intersect each other at an angle, the body of the post defining an open front;

a generally horizontal shoulder disposed on top of the first and second planar surfaces at the first end of the body;

a columnar member extending upwardly from the shoulder;

a seat disposed on the second end of the body, the seat comprising a planar portion that is parallel to the shoulder and a protruding portion extending upwardly from the planar portion, the protruding portion has a first thickness, the protruding portion defines a cavity therein, wherein the cavity extends through the planar portion of the seat, the cavity being sized and configured to receive a corresponding columnar member of a second post;

an elongated rib extending from the shoulder to the seat and extending outwardly from the intersection of the first planar surface and the second planar surface of the body so that the rib bisects the angle formed at the intersection of the first planar surface and the second planar surface, the rib has a second thickness, wherein the first thickness is larger or smaller than the second thickness; and

a skirt extending from the body and surrounding the seat, the skirt and the seat defining a tapered recess there between, that expands to receive a portion of a corresponding shelf wall.

12. The post of claim **11**, wherein the tapered recess is configured to receive a corner of the shelf.

13. The post of claim **12**, wherein the skirt is not parallel to a wall of the seat.

14. The post of claim **12**, wherein the skirt is parallel to a wall of the seat when the corner of the shelf is received in the tapered recess.

15. The post of claim **11**, wherein the skirt comprises a lip projecting obliquely from a base of the skirt.

16. The post of claim **11**, comprising a plurality of ribs extending from the body.

17. An interlocking post assembly comprising:

at least two posts, the at least two posts comprises a first and a second post each of the first and second posts each comprising:

a body comprising a first end, a second end opposite the first end and a first planar surface and a second planar surface extending between the first end and the second end of the body;

a generally horizontal shoulder disposed at the first end of the body;

a columnar member extending upwardly from the shoulder;

a seat disposed opposite the shoulder, the seat comprising a planar portion that is parallel to the shoulder and a protruding portion extending upwardly from the planar portion, the protruding portion defines a first thickness and a cavity therein;

the first planar surface and a second planar surface disposed between and joining the shoulder and the seat, the first planar surface and a second planar surface intersect each other at an angle and extend from the shoulder to the seat, and a rib extending from the shoulder to the seat and bisecting the pair of planar surfaces, the rib defines a second thickness, wherein the first thickness is larger or smaller than the second thickness; and

a skirt extending from the body and surrounding the seat, the skirt comprising a lip projecting obliquely from a base of the skirt, the skirt and the seat defining a tapered recess there between, having a closed end and

an open end, wherein the tapered recess is wider at the closed end than the open end so that when the columnar member of the first post is slidably received by the cavity of the second post, the shoulder of the first post and the seat of the second post are disposed in abutting engagement, and the skirt of the second post is disposed in gripping engagement with the first post.

18. The interlocking post assembly of claim **17**, wherein the tapered recess of the second post expands to receive a portion of the body of the first post.

19. The interlocking post assembly of claim **18**, wherein the engagement of the first post against the lip of the second post urges the skirt of the second post away from the seat of the second post.

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